

What is Claimed:

1 1. An absorbent article comprising:
2 a barrier layer;
3 a cover layer extending substantially parallel to said barrier layer; and
4 a superabsorbent polymer interposed between said cover layer and said
5 barrier layer, said superabsorbent polymer being adhered to said article in a pattern
6 configured to distribute fluid in said absorbent article, wherein at least one portion of
7 said absorbent article extending essentially completely across said absorbent article is
8 substantially devoid of said superabsorbent polymer.

1 2. The absorbent article of claim 1 further comprising a core
2 interposed between said cover layer and said barrier layer, wherein said
3 superabsorbent polymer is applied to said core or said barrier layer in said pattern .

1 3. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said pattern is configured
2 to increase resistance of said absorbent article to tearing, said at least one portion of
3 said absorbent article extending essentially completely across said absorbent article
4 being more resistant to tearing than at least one other portion of said absorbent article.

1 4. The absorbent article of claim 1 further comprising a core
2 interposed between said cover layer and said barrier layer, wherein said core comprises
3 at least one of cellulose and cellulose acetate.

1 5. The absorbent article of claim 4 wherein said core is selected from
2 the group consisting of tissue, air laid composite, and paper towel sheet.

1 6. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said barrier layer
2 comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene,
3 copolymers of polyethylene and polypropylene, polyester, and bi-component fibers.

1 7. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said cover layer
2 comprises one or both of a non-woven material and an apertured film.

1 8. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said pattern forms at
2 least one region including said superabsorbent polymer and at least one continuous
3 zone that is substantially devoid of said superabsorbent polymer, said continuous zone
4 having greater tear resistance than said region including said superabsorbent polymer.

1 9. The absorbent article of claim 8 wherein said pattern is selected
2 from the group consisting of a spiral pattern, a melt blown pattern, a multi-tracked
3 pattern, a full coat pattern, a zoned spray pattern, and an intermittent pattern.

1 10. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said superabsorbent
2 polymer is formed from one or more of a polymer in liquid form and a polymer formed
3 by conversion of a superabsorbent precursor, said superabsorbent precursor comprising
4 one or both of a monomer and an oligomer.

1 11. A method of making an absorbent article comprising the steps of:

2 a) positioning a superabsorbent polymer adjacent a barrier layer in a
3 pattern to form at least one region including the superabsorbent polymer and at least
4 one region substantially devoid of said superabsorbent polymer extending essentially
5 completely across the barrier layer, thereby providing the region substantially devoid of
6 superabsorbent polymer with greater tear resistance than the region including the
7 superabsorbent polymer; and

8 b) attaching a cover layer substantially parallel to and substantially
9 coextensive with said barrier layer, thereby interposing said superabsorbent polymer
10 between the barrier layer and the cover layer.

1 12. The method of claim 11 further comprising the step of interposing
2 a core between the barrier layer and the cover layer, wherein said positioning step
3 comprises applying the superabsorbent polymer to the core.

1 13. A method of making an absorbent article comprising the steps of:

2 a) positioning a liquid comprising a superabsorbent precursor adjacent a
3 barrier layer in a pattern to form at least one region including the superabsorbent
4 precursor and at least one region substantially devoid of the superabsorbent precursor
5 extending essentially completely across the barrier layer, thereby providing the region
6 substantially devoid of superabsorbent polymer with greater tear resistance than the
7 region including the superabsorbent polymer;

8 b) converting the superabsorbent precursor to a superabsorbent polymer,
9 thereby forming at least one region including the superabsorbent polymer and at least
10 one region devoid of the superabsorbent polymer; and

11 c) coupling a cover layer to the barrier layer, thereby interposing the
12 superabsorbent polymer between the barrier layer and the cover layer.

1 14. The method of claim 13 further comprising the step of interposing
2 a core between the barrier layer and the cover layer, wherein said positioning step
3 comprises applying the liquid to the core.

1 15. An absorbent article comprising:

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2 **a barrier layer;**
3 **a cover layer extending substantially parallel to said barrier layer;**
4 **an absorbent layer interposed between said cover layer and said barrier**
5 **layer; and**
6 **a superabsorbent polymer applied in liquid form to said absorbent layer,**
7 **said superabsorbent polymer being applied in a pattern configured to distribute fluid in**
8 **said absorbent article, wherein portions of said absorbent layer are at least partially**
9 **coated with said superabsorbent polymer and other portions of said absorbent layer are**
10 **substantially free of said superabsorbent polymer.**

1 **16. An absorbent underpad comprising:**
2 **a barrier layer;**
3 **a cover layer extending substantially parallel to said barrier layer;**
4 **a tissue layer interposed between said cover layer and said barrier layer;**
5 **and**
6 **a superabsorbent polymer applied in liquid form to said absorbent layer,**
7 **said superabsorbent polymer being applied in a pattern configured to distribute fluid in**
8 **said absorbent article, wherein portions of said absorbent layer are at least partially**
9 **coated with said superabsorbent polymer and other portions of said absorbent layer are**
10 **substantially free of said superabsorbent polymer.**